



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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ABS SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE HOBART OFFICE

Client Services

When you need to engage professional, timely and objective statistical consultancy services, first consider the range of services available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The ABS Hobart Office has a team of consultants available to answer all your information and statistical enquiries on a fee for service basis. Our consultants can assist you with provision of data for the most recent period available or on a time series basis. They can provide tailored reports containing tables, commentary and maps which highlight the characteristics of a target market. To discuss your information needs please contact client.services@abs.gov.au.

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AUSSTATS TRAINING FOR STATE GOVERNMENT STAFF

AusStats is the ABS's web-based information service - providing the full range of ABS products online, updated daily. ABS Tasmania is currently offering free AusStats training to all state government staff. This offer is made in conjunction with the introduction of AusStats access across the whole of state government. This new arrangement will enable all staff with internet access to download ABS publications, spreadsheets and data cubes.

The training will introduce participants to AusStats. It explains what AusStats is, shows users how to access, navigate through and find publications, time series spreadsheets, datacubes and census data. A basic introduction to using SuperTABLE is also included.

Sessions can be tailored to be a demonstration only or a demonstration followed by a hands-on session using exercises.

Nominations for the training are being coordinated through the Tasmanian Statistical Advisory Committee (TSAC) representatives in each agency. If you don't know who your TSAC representative is please email wendy.cannell@abs.gov.au or phone (03) 6222 5985.

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NATIONAL ACCOUNTS TRAINING

If you need to know more about National Accounts, ABS Hobart is holding a training course on 22 March, 2005. The course is aimed essentially at the non-statistician and provides a good overview of the structure of National Accounts.

To find out more about the course and how to reserve a position, see *National Accounts 1 - an overview*.

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STATE STATISTICAL PRIORITIES

The ABS regularly reviews its forward work program and employs a number of processes to ensure that the information being collected remains relevant to the needs of government and the community. These processes include the Australian Statistical Advisory Council (ASAC), the State Statistical Forum (SSF), state statistical coordination bodies in each state and territory, and user advisory groups for particular subject matter areas.

Another input to ABS Tasmania's forward work plan is the annual State Statistical Priorities paper, which details the state's priority statistical needs. Written submissions are invited from each state government agency and the resulting document is forwarded to ABS senior management for consideration.

The 2005 paper is now complete, and ABS Tasmania's Regional Director, Dick Crockett, will be responding shortly to agency heads indicating the current state of play on issues raised and offering to discuss the issues raised and how the ABS might be able to assist further with each agency's statistical work. Services the ABS can provide include statistical training courses for agency staff, assistance with survey and questionnaire design for those running surveys, statistical advice on data management issues, and in some cases providing an outposted statistical consultant to work on particular projects.

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STATE STATISTICAL FORUM

This year's State Statistical Forum meeting was held on 15 February. Each year the Australian Statistician, along with his senior managers, meets with a group of state and territory representatives to discuss statistical issues. The meeting provides an opportunity for the states and territories to raise any concerns and to receive a first hand update on the ABS future statistical work program.

A key item on the agenda was the priority information needs of the states and territories. A well-known requirement is for more detailed statistics at smaller geographic areas. Increasingly, there is a requirement for new data to be collected for emerging areas like information technology, innovation and environment. The ABS balances these requests with its budget, its ongoing commitments to existing data collections, the feasibility of collecting good quality information, and the level of imposition on survey respondents (known as 'provider load').

Among other items discussed at this year's meeting were developments in population statistics, an update on the National Data Network, and the national education and training

information development plan.

To request a copy of the Tasmania 2005 State Statistical Priorities Paper contact Wendy Cannell on (03) 6222 5985 or email wendy.cannell@abs.gov.au.

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TASMANIA TOGETHER

The ABS is continuing its statistical support for Tasmania Together - the state's long term strategic planning process. Recent ABS activity has included providing advice on statistical methods and sources for the reviews of a variety of benchmarks, as well as providing best practice documents on benchmarking. Collaborative work with the Progress Board Secretariat has focussed on living conditions in Tasmania, and public comment has recently been sought on the development of benchmarks in housing affordability, education and the environment.

For further information please contact Chris Carswell on (03) 6222 5848 or email chris.carswell@abs.gov.au.

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ENHANCING THE POPULATION CENSUS: DEVELOPING A LONGITUDINAL VIEW

The ABS is expecting to release an information paper on 20 April about a proposal to enhance the value of 2006 Census of Population and Housing data by combining it over time with data from future censuses, and other ABS data.

The information paper will include specific information on key issues on which submissions are sought, as well as providing examples of potential cases where the enhanced data provides potential statistical value.

The ABS encourages the public and other interested parties to submit their views on the proposal. The information paper and submission form will be available from the ABS web site. Those wishing to provide feedback can lodge a submission on-line through the web site or on a paper form. To request a copy of the information paper or submission form, email rosalie.butler@abs.gov.au.

The closing date for submissions will be early May 2005.

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PERSONAL INCOME FOR SMALL AREAS

The Information Paper: Experimental Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, Taxation and Income Support Data, 1995-96 to 2000-01 (cat. no. 6524.0) was released in January and is available without charge from the ABS web site. It shows (for local government areas) experimental estimates of the flows of various types of income (e.g. wages and salaries, investment income, government cash benefits) and how personal income and its distribution by source change from year to year. For example, it provides data to support analysis of the effect of regional initiatives and unusual events (e.g. droughts, business closures) on regional personal incomes.

The publication is accompanied by a series of data cubes (Excel spreadsheets): Experimental Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, Taxation and Income Support Data, 1995-96 to 2000-01 (cat. no. 6524.0.55.001). These two spreadsheets contain regional experimental estimates (for statistical local areas) of the sources and total amount of personal income people receive.

These statistics have been derived from a combination of Australian Taxation Office and Department of Family and Community Services data. It is intended to update the publication

and the underlying data set annually.

For more information contact Claire Conroy, Director of the ABS's Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre, at claire.conroy@abs.gov.au.

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PRICE INDEXES AND CONTRACT PRICE INDEXATION

The paper Price Indexes and Contract Price Indexation (Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods, Appendix 2) was released in January and is available free of charge from the ABS web site. The paper sets out a range of issues that should be taken into account by parties considering an Indexation Clause in a contract using an ABS published price index.

Price indexes published by the ABS provide summary measures of the movements in various categories of prices over time. They are published primarily for use in government economic analysis. Price indexes are also often used in contracts by businesses and government to adjust payments and/or charges to take account of changes in categories of prices (Indexation Clauses).

For more information contact Steve Whennan, Assistant Director, Prices Branch on (02) 6252 6251 or email steve.whennan@abs.gov.au.

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HEDONIC PRICE INDEXES FOR PERSONAL COMPUTERS

The Information Paper: The Introduction of Hedonic Price Indexes for Personal Computers (cat. no. 6458.0) was released in February and is available without charge from the ABS web site. The ABS has prepared this information paper as a basis for user consultation on a strategy that is being adopted for enhancing our statistical service in the field of price statistics.

The information paper presents the methodology that the ABS proposes to use to adjust computer prices for quality change and plans for implementation. For more information on topics covered in the information paper, contact Matthew Berger, Director, Producer Price Indexes on (02) 6252 6170 or email matthew.berger@abs.gov.au.

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TIME SERIES ANALYSIS

The Information Paper: An Introductory Course on Time Series Analysis (cat. no. 1346.0.55.001) was released in January and is available without charge from the ABS web site. The purpose of the course notes and exercises is to encourage understanding of time series analysis issues, in particular those issues relevant to time series analysis in the ABS. Included is an introduction to some of the theory underlying time series analysis, a discussion of different seasonal adjustment philosophies and issues relating to seasonal adjustment. The course notes concentrate on the filter based approach to seasonal adjustment as this is the method most commonly applied in the ABS.

Also available without charge on the ABS web site is the Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends (cat. no. 1349.0), published in August 2003. The purpose of this information paper is to assist users of ABS time series data to identify and analyse the underlying movement of the series. The paper explains the statistical concepts and notions that underpin the statistical procedures employed by the ABS to obtain the trend estimates. Details of the smoothing filters used to produce trend estimates are given, including the preliminary filters used towards the end of the time series.

For more information contact Time Series Analysis in Canberra on 02 6252 6345 or email timeseries@abs.gov.au.

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SELECTED RECENT RELEASES

3303.0 Causes of Death, Australia (released 24/02/2005) This publication contains summary statistics on causes of death for the general population, together with selected statistics on perinatal deaths. These statistics have been compiled from data made available to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) by the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each state or territory.

8755.0 Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, December quarter, 2004 (released 23/02/2005) This publication contains preliminary estimates of building and engineering construction work done during the current quarter and revised estimates for the previous two quarters. The estimates of building work done and engineering work done are from the quarterly Building Activity Survey and the quarterly Engineering Construction Survey respectively.

3311.6.55.001 Demography, Tasmania (released 22/02/2005) This electronic product provides a demographic overview of Tasmania, 2003. It contains summary tables and commentary on trends in the components of population change including births, deaths and migration. Marriages, divorces, estimated resident population and various demographic rates are also presented. Population and migration data are for the year ended 30 June 2003, while births, deaths, marriages and divorces data are for the year ended 31 December 2003.

4513.0 Criminal Courts, Australia (released 11/02/2005) This publication presents information relating to the criminal jurisdiction of the Higher (Supreme and Intermediate) and Magistrates' Courts in each state and territory, which is sourced from the national Criminal Courts collection produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) with the cooperation of the states and territories.

8155.0 Australian Industry (released 07/02/2005) This publication presents data for a large range of industries, together with some comparative statistics for 2000-01. This is the first issue where the Australian Business Number (ABN) is the primary basis for all the statistical units used to collect the data. The estimates at the state and territory level are considered to be experimental, and should be used with care.

FUTURE RELEASES

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About this release

Statistical News Tasmania is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical releases, seminars, training and reviews.

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